

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, BTIO, EEWT, ETRD, SHUM, US, CZ

SUBJECT: JAKUBEC-VEST MEETING, OCTOBER 18

1. DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE JAROSLAV JAKUBEC MET WITH EUR ASSISTANT SECRETARY GEORGE VEST AT 10 AM ON OCTOBER 28. ACCOMPANYING JAKUBEC WERE AMBASSADOR JOHANES, COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR VALENT, AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE GENERAL DIRECTOR KELLER, WHO SERVED AS INTERPRETER. WILLIAM BARRACLOUGH, EB DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICY, CARL SCHMIDT, EUR/EE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AND JAMES GLENN PARTICIPATED IN THE MEETING. DEPARTMENT IS POUCHING THE BRIEFING MEMO PREPARED FOR THIS MEETING.

2. VEST BEGAN BY SAYING THAT WE WELCOMED THE VISIT OF JAKUBEC AND HIS DELEGATION, AND THAT WE SUPPORTED THE WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COUNCIL. JAKUBEC COMMENTED THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNCIL MEETING HAD BEEN A RELATIVE SUCCESS IN THAT IT HAD ACCOMPLISHED ALL IT COULD HAVE. HE MENTIONED APPOINTMENTS WHICH HE HAD HAD ON CAPITOL HILL WITH SENATOR RIBICOFF AND CONGRESSMEN VANIK, FRENZEL, AND BINGHAM. HE HAD ALSO MET CONGRESSMEN MOTTI AND GAYDOS AND SAW VANIK AGAIN AT A RECEPTION AT THE CSSR EMBASSY. HE HAD ALSO CALLED ON DEPUTY SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE WOLF. HOWEVER, IT

WOULD BE PREMATURE, HE SAID, TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS FROM THOSE MEETINGS; HE WAS WAITING TO HEAR WHAT OFFICIALS AT

STATE AND COMMERCE HAD TO SAY.

3. JAKUBEC CONTINUED THAT HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT US-CZECHOSLOVAK ECONOMIC RELATIONS WERE A CLOSED CIRCLE FROM WHICH THERE WAS NO EXIT. HE KNEW HOW BOTH SIDES COULD ESCAPE THE CIRCLE, HE SAID, BUT THE US DID NOT WANT TO. HE STRESSED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING CLOSER ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE U.S., AS INDICATED BY HIS PRESENCE IN WASHINGTON. CZECHOSLOVAKIA WANTS NORMAL, NATURAL, AND FAIR TIES WITH THE US SIMILAR TO THOSE WHICH IT HAS WITH OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES. INDEED, HE ADDED, THE BASIC QUESTION OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS IS JUST HOW TO REMOVE THE OBSTACLES TO TRADE. TRADE DEVELOPMENT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH SIDES EVEN THOUGH CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S SHARE OF U.S. TRADE IS SMALL. INCREASED TRADE HELPS FURTHER PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE. BASED ON HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCIL MEETING PARTICIPANTS, JAKUBEC SAID, HE BELIEVED THAT THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST ON THE US SIDE IN TRADE DEVELOPMENT.

4. HOWEVER, JAKUBEC SAID, HE MUST AT THIS POINT REFER TO THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH WAS REPORTED IN THAT MORNING'S NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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CARTER'S OCTOBER 27 PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS. CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD BEEN MENTIONED IN THAT CONTEXT. (WE ASSUME EMBASSY HAS FULL TEXT OF PRESS CONFERENCE IN USIA WIRELESS FILE.) IT SEEMED TO HIM, JAKUBEC SAID, THAT THE IMPACT OF THESE REMARKS WOULD BREAK APART ANY ACHIEVEMENTS THAT WERE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE ECONOMIC COUNCIL'S MEETING. HE WAS COMPELLED TO ASK WHETHER THE COUNCIL'S MEETING AND EVEN HIS OWN VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES HAD NOT BEEN IN VAIN. WERE NOT THEY SUPERFLUOUS IN THE LIGHT OF THESE PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS? IT SEEMED THAT OUR RELATIONS WERE SUCH THAT EFFORTS TO DEVELOP TRADE COULD BE STOPPED BY ONE ACTION OR SYMBOLIC STROKE OF THE PEN. JAKUBEC ASKED VEST FOR HIS VIEWS ON HOW ECONOMIC TIES WOULD BE AFFECTED BY THE CARTER PRESS CONFERENCE.

5. VEST THANKED JAKUBEC FOR HAVING BROUGHT THE MATTER UP, FOR OTHERWISE, HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO. VEST SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING HAD NOT BEEN IN VAIN, NOR HAD THE DEPUTY MINISTER'S VISIT. THERE WERE TWO POINTS WHICH HE WISHED TO MAKE CLEAR. FIRST, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS IN FAVOR OF EFFORTS TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE TRADE AND ECONOMIC TIES WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA. SECONDLY, IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE U.S., WHERE INITIATIVE FOR TRADE IS LEFT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND TO

INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSMEN, THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE MOMENT FOR SUCH TRADE HAS BECOME UNFAVORABLE BECAUSE OF THE RECENT

TRIAL IN PRAGUE OF CHARTER 77 SUPPORTERS, WHICH WE BELIEVED WAS CONTRARY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. IT WAS A FACT OF LIFE THAT THE TRIAL WILL HAVE SUCH CONSEQUENCES. THE SITUATION NOW IS THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BUT THAT THE TRIAL HAS HINDERED EFFORTS TO DO SO. THERE IS A BALANCE OR TRADE-OFF BETWEEN THE TWO; THAT IS HOW THE U.S. SYSTEM WORKS. VEST SAID HE WAS SPEAKING VERY FRANKLY AS HE THOUGHT THE DEPUTY MINISTER WOULD WANT HIM TO DO.
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6. AMBASSADOR JOHANES SAID THAT, AS HE AND MR. VEST HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED, HIS GOVERNMENT'S OPINION IS THAT EVERY COUNTRY HAS ITS OWN LAWS AND COURTS. ANYONE VIOLATING THE LAW MUST SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES. IT IS NOT FOR ONE COUNTRY TO TELL ANOTHER WHAT TO DO IN THIS RESPECT. THAT WOULD BE INTERFERENCE. JOHANES SAID THE FOUR INDIVIDUALS HAD NOT BEEN TRIED FOR SIGNING THE CHARTER; THEIRS WAS NOT A CASE OF DISSENTING FROM GOVERNMENT ACTION. RATHER, IT WAS A CASE OF VIOLATING THE LAW. TO CONNECT THIS TRIAL TO TRADE, JOHANES SAID, WAS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH OUR MUTUAL DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS.

7. VEST RESPONDED BY CITING THE IMPACT OF THE NEWS REPORTS OF THE TRIAL ON INDIVIDUAL U.S. CITIZENS. HE NOTED THAT THEIR ATTITUDE PLAYS A MAJOR PART IN DETERMINING WHAT OUR POLICY WILL BE. AT THE SAME TIME, VEST SAID, HE WISHED TO POINT OUT THAT NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COUNTRIES IS STATIC. IT WAS CERTAINLY POSSIBLE THAT CIRCUMSTANCES COULD CHANGE AND EVOLVE SO THAT THESE PRESENT IRRITANTS COULD DISAPPEAR. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS AFFECTED ADVERSELY BY IRRITANTS SUCH AS THE TRIAL.

8. JAKUBEC RESPONDED THAT WHILE HE DID NOT AGREE WITH WHAT VEST HAD JUST SAID, HE PERSONALLY UNDERSTOOD IT, ALTHOUGH OTHERS IN HIS GOVERNMENT NO DOUBT WOULD NOT. HE THEN MENTIONED HIS DISCUSSIONS ON CAPITOL HILL IN WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS HAD COME UP. BOTH COUNTRIES, HE SAID, HAD DIFFERENT VIEWS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, FOR EXAMPLE, HUMAN RIGHTS MEAN ENSURING WORK FOR EVERYONE. ONE OF THE CONGRESSMEN WHOM HE MET HAD SUGGESTED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA WORK TO IMPROVE ITS RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE THE U.S. WOULD WORK TO REMOVE THE BILATERAL TRADE
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IMPEDIMENTS. BUT, JAKUBEC ADDED, WHEN HE ASKED THE CONGRESSMAN WHAT HE WOULD SAY IF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WERE TO OFFER TO NEGOTIATE A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. ON THE CONDITION THAT IT INCLUDE A PROVISION REQUIRING THE U.S. TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL U.S. CITIZENS, HE HAD

NO RESPONSE. TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, JAKUBEC CONTINUED, ARE TWO SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT THINGS. THERE IS MUTUAL INTEREST IN, AND GREAT POSSIBILITIES FOR, INCREASING TRADE. THIS IS THE QUEST OF THE FUTURE. BUT WHEN IN THE FUTURE IT WILL OCCUR IS DIFFICULT TO SAY.

9. VEST SAID THAT THE CONGRESSMAN WAS RIGHT IN THE BROAD CONTEXT IN TYING THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO INCREASED TRADE. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO CONSIDER THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. HE RECOGNIZED THAT OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT NOT AGREE WITH US. WE PLACED PRIORITY ON CERTAIN OBJECTIVES WHILE OTHER COUNTRIES HAD OTHER PRIORITIES. HOWEVER, VEST SAID, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ATTACHED TO THIS ELEMENT OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY.

10. JAKUBEC ASKED IF THE RIGHT TO WORK IS A HUMAN RIGHT. VEST SAID THAT IN THE U.S. A GUARANTEED JOB IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A HUMAN RIGHT BUT THAT THE RIGHT TO CHANGE JOBS IS IMPORTANT AND IS CONSIDERED TO BE A HUMAN RIGHT. JAKUBEC RESPONDED THAT, IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, BOTH ARE CONSIDERED HUMAN RIGHTS.

11. RETURNING TO THE QUESTION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, JAKUBEC SAID THAT A BEGINNING IS NECESSARY. BEFORE HIS MEETING AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT, HE HAD MET A NUMBER OF PERSONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION WHO TOLD HIM THAT THE EFFORT TO IMPROVE BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS MUST BEGIN IN THE CONGRESS. BUT AFTER HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PERSONS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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CONGRESS, HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS EFFORT MUST BEGIN IN THE ADMINISTRATION. WHAT WAS THE REAL ANSWER?

12. VEST RESPONDED THAT THERE WAS NO SINGLE ANSWER. WHAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DOES WITH REGARD TO LEGISLATION -- WHETHER ON TRADE, ENERGY, OR ANY OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUE -- MUST BE WORKED OUT BY CAREFUL CONSULTATION BETWEEN CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION. THEREFORE, VEST SAID, IT WAS ESPECIALLY GOOD THAT JAKUBEC HAD BEEN ABLE TO SPEAK WITH OFFICIALS OF BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES.

13. IN CONCLUSION, JAKUBEC INDICATED THAT HE APPRECIATED VEST'S FRANK APPRAISAL OF THE CURRENT SITUATION, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT MADE HAPPY BY IT. NEVERTHELESS, JAKUBEC SAID, AS A RESULT OF VEST'S REMARK THAT OUR RELATIONS WOULD NOT REMAIN STATIC, HE WOULD GO AWAY WITH AT LEAST SOME BIT OF OPTIMISM THAT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD CHANGE AND, CONSEQUENTLY, THAT US-CZECHOSLOVAK ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS WOULD

BEGIN TO IMPROVE. VEST AGREED THAT THERE MUST BE ROOM FOR
OPTIMISM AND URGED THE DEPUTY MINISTER TO CONTINUE HIS
DISCUSSIONS WITH AMBASSADOR BYRNE. VANCE

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